



WIVENHOE URBAN DISTRICT
COUNCIL.



REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR 1919.



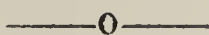
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1920.

TO THE

Wivenhoe Urban District Council.



MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present you my Report for the year 1919.

Natural and Social Conditions of the District.

The population by the census of 1911 was 2,376. The population of 1919 was estimated at 2,348 for the death-rate, and 2,446 for the birth-rate. The death-rate figure excludes all non-civilian males, whether serving at home or abroad. The birth-rate population is estimated by taking the death-rate figure, plus a proportion of all non-civilians enlisted from this country.

The Wivenhoe Urban District comprises the village of Wivenhoe and part of the surrounding rural district to the North and East of it, until it meets the boundaries of the Borough of Colchester and the parishes of Ardleigh and Elmstead.

The village itself rises on a hill-side from the North bank of the river Colne to the table-land above, which is just under 100 feet above sea level ; the newer houses being on the hill-top.

The climate is remarkably mild and dry. The soil is generally gravel, over London clay, which lies on a chalky bed.

The chief industry is centred in the Shipyard of Messrs. Rennie Forrestt & Co. There are two other works for motor and other boat building. There is also a timber yard. Sea fishing in the estuary of the Thames is carried on by several vessels, but not to such an extent as formerly.

Several of the male population are employed as Yachtsmen, and the river Colne has long been famous for its Yachtsmen, especially in connection with Yacht Racing.

There are no industries that are inimicable to Public Health.

The Vital Statistics (a table of which is appended), show a normal death-rate (13·2 per 1,000), which is slightly lower than the average for the whole of England and Wales. The birth-rate (16·3 per 1,000), is about its usual level, but lower than the general average. The births (40) exceed the deaths (31) by 9. The infantile mortality (deaths under one year), is only apparently high as five of the seven deaths were inevitable, and caused by premature birth or mal-development and occurred within 48 hours of birth. The two remaining cases, one of diarrhœa and one of bronchitis, would give a mortality rate of only 50 per 1,000 births. Hospital and Institutional relief have been utilised to a considerable extent. The number of persons receiving Poor Law relief was 12.

Sanitary Circumstances of the District.

Water.—A sufficient, constant and good water supply is derived from the Council's Water Works. The water is pumped from a well over 100 feet deep in the chalk. There is no suspicion of any contamination of the supply.

Rivers and Streams.—Wivenhoe, as before stated, is on the river Colne, which is a tidal river. A small running brook flows through the village, and takes the drainage from a number of houses in the lower part of the village. The surface water from the main roads drains into an open ditch which runs across the marshes to the West of Wivenhoe, into the river Colne. One house has its drainage emptying into this ditch, after passing through a septic tank. Owing to the absence of an appropriate fall, this ditch is sluggish and at times stagnant.

Drainage and Sewerage.—The surface drains are sufficient. The arrangements for sewerage are not modern, but on the other hand, the marked healthiness of, and absence of infectious diseases in the place, supports rather than condemns the existing arrangements.

A small number of houses have water closets emptying into the drains; some others have water closets emptying into dead-wells. The houses on the Quay drain into the river Colne.

The majority of the houses in Wivenhoe and in the rural district have pail closets. Some have privies or dead-wells. The pail closets and dustbins are emptied by contract twice weekly. The privies and dead-wells are emptied as frequently as they can be dealt with. Old fixed dustbins are being replaced by moveable covered metal ones.

The number of pail closets is 460. Privies with covered middens 70. Water closets with flushing cisterns 44. Without flushing cisterns (rural cottages) 9. The number of privies has been reduced by 18 in the last eight years. When it becomes practicable, a complete system of sewerage should be instituted.

The Sanitary Inspector made 250 inspections of premises. Nuisances existed in 22 cases. 13 informal notices were served. No statutory notices were served. In 21 cases the nuisances were abated.

Sanitary Administration.—The staff consists of the Medical Officer of Health and the Sanitary Inspector, who is also the Surveyor and Housing Inspector.

A standing arrangement exists with the Borough of Colchester for admission of cases of Infectious Disease, including smallpox, to their Fever Hospital. There is no local Hospital.

Adoptive Acts and Bye-Laws.—The following Acts have been adopted and apply to the whole Area:—

	<i>Date of Adoption.</i>
Infectious Diseases (Prevention) Act, 1890 ..	26th May, 1898
„ „ (Notification) Act, 1889 (As to Acute Poliomyelitis and Cerebro-Spinal Fever)	10th June, 1912
Public Health (Amendment) Act, 1890 ...	23rd June, 1898

Bye-Laws—

Cleansing of Footways, Privies, etc., and the removal of House Refuse	...	...	19th Nov., 1900
Removal of Refuse by Public Authority	...	...	19th Nov., 1900
Nuisances, etc.	...	...	19th Nov., 1900
Slaughterhouses	...	...	19th Nov., 1900
New Streets and Buildings	...	...	28th April, 1899

Infectious Diseases.

Influenza.—An epidemic occurred in the early part of the year, which, however, did not approach either in its severity or in the number of persons affected, the epidemic of the late autumn of 1918. There were no fatal cases in this epidemic.

Scarlet Fever.—Four cases occurred, three of which were in one house, which was overcrowded. These three cases were sent to the Isolation Hospital. The other case was sufficiently isolated at home. None of these cases were fatal.

Diphtheria.—No cases.

Tuberculosis.—Three cases occurred. Two pulmonary and one non-pulmonary. One death occurred from pulmonary tuberculosis.

Measles.—Five cases occurred, with no deaths.

Malaria.—Two cases ; no deaths.

Pneumonia.—Two cases ; no deaths.

Erysipelas.—One case ; no death.

Dysentery and Trench Fever.—No cases.

Smallpox.—No cases. Provision was made for vaccination by the Medical Officer of Health, but there were no applicants.

Puerperal Fever and Ophthalmia Neonatorum.—No cases.

The prevalence of notifiable infectious disease was very slight. Bacteriological aid to diagnosis was always granted on application from medical practitioners ; the expense being borne by the Urban Council. Now (1920), the County Council is providing free Bacteriological examinations.

Birth-rate, Death-rate and Analysis of Mortality during the Year 1919.

Birth-rate per 1,000, total population.	Annual Death-rate per 1,000, Civilian Population.								Rate per 1,000 Births.		Percentage of Total Deaths.			
	All Causes.	Enteric Fever.	Smallpox.	Measles.	Scarlet Fever.	Whooping Cough.	Diphtheria.	Violence.	Diarrhoea and Enteritis (under 2 years).	Total Deaths under 1 year.	Deaths in Public Institutions.	Certified Causes.	Inquest Cases.	Uncertified Causes of Death.
16.3	13.2	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.4	25	175	25.6	22.4	3.2	—

Schools.

The schools are modern, well ventilated and in good sanitary condition, and have a good water supply.

Food.

Milk Supply.—This is derived from farms in the neighbourhood. There is an ample supply and the quality of the milk is invariably good.

Under the Milk (Mothers and Children) Order, 1918, the Council arranged that milk should be provided in necessitous cases.

Other Foods.—The Sanitary Inspector visits periodically the premises concerned in the manufacture of foods, and inspects foods exposed for sale. There is one slaughterhouse which is kept in a cleanly condition. The bakehouses are well kept.

Maternity and Child Welfare.—The Local Authority is awaiting the formation of the County Scheme, and has undertaken to join in it as soon as it is completed. Previously to 1919, the scheme had been worked by the local Nursing Association's District Nurse, but it did not prove satisfactory, and was consequently abandoned.

Housing.

The total number of houses is 663; of these, 644 are working-class houses. No new houses were built in the year. Overcrowding existed in the case of ten houses, which averaged ten occupants to each four roomed house. The population is on the increase and housing accommodation is deficient. Several workmen employed here have to live at a distance, owing to the shortage.

The Council has had in view, for a long while, the building of 50 houses on an ideal site of about 12 acres, which it has already purchased, on the high land.

A firm of builders had provisionally estimated to provide a very desirable type of villa at £550, but on revising their estimate they found that the price would have to be £940. This price was found to be prohibitive, and now the Council are considering a type of Parlour Cottage, on estimates approximating £800 each; or alternatively, Bungalows.

Several of the houses in the lower part of Wivenhoe, near the river, are un-repairable and shall be gradually eliminated as new houses are built. Others in the same locality need minor repairs, and also alterations to their sanitary arrangements. The Housing Inspector is giving attention to these matters.

I have the honour to be, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

G. TRAVERS KEVERN,

Medical Officer of Health.

March, 1920.



